

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOMBAY 00674 151640Z

42

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 SSO-00 EB-07

INR-07 INRE-00 /050 W
----- 016032

O 151334Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6248

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 0674

STADIS//////////

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH

SUBJ: TARAPUR NUCLEAR FUEL EXPORT LICENSE

REF: STATE 060871

1. I TRANSMITTED QUESTIONS POSED PARAS 2 AND 3 OF REFTEL TO SETHNA AND DISCUSSED WITH HIM DEPARTMENT'S NEED FOR A SIMPLER PRESENTATION THAN THAT CONTAINED IN HIS EARLIER LETTER (BOMBAY'S 636). HE INDICATED HE HAD TWO PROBLEMS - ONE ANALYTICAL AND THE OTHER POLITICAL (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT USE THIS PRECISE TERM). HE BELIEVES THAT SIMPLY FROM ANALYTICAL STANDPOINT PROBLEM IS TOO COMPLICATED TO PERMIT SOLUTION TO BE STATED IN SIMPLE TERMS SUGGESTED BY REFTEL. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE IS LOOKING AHEAD TO PROTECT HIMSELF IN NEW DELHI AGAINST CHARGES THAT HE HAS LET MATTER DRAG ALONG FOR TOO LONG. THEREFORE, IT IS TO HIS ADVANTAGE HERE IN DEFENDING HIS RECORD ON THIS MATTER TO MINIMIZE EFFECTS OF DELAY UP TO THIS POINT. I AM AFRAID THAT THIS IS COURSE HE HAS CHOSEN IN HIS REPLY TO REFTEL, WHICH IS BEING TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY.

1. ANOTHER FACTOR THAT INFLUNCED THIS APPROACH WAS HIS CONCLUSION THAT IMMEDIATE ISSUANCE OF XSNM-805 WOULD NOT HELP MUCH; IT WOULD ADD ONLY 30 FUEL BUNDLES WHEN ABOUT 75 TO 105 ARE NEEDED FOR A RECHARGE.

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EM INDICATING GROWING SENSITIVITY THAT SETHNA ATTACHES TO ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO HIM INDICATING POSSIBILITY OF A REDUCTION IN TARAPUR POWER OUTPUT IS THAT HE INITIALLY WANTED HIS LATEST LETTER ON THIS MATTER CLASSIFIED AS CONFIDENTIAL. HOWEVER, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION J.C.SHAH, SPEAKING FOR SETHAN, AGREED THAT AS LONG AS NO SUCH STRICTURES WERE ATTACHED TO SETHNA'S EARLIER LETTER (BOMBAY'S 636) IT WOULD NOT MAKE MUCH SENSE IN THIS CASE THEREFORE, WE HAVE AUTHORITY TO USE SETHNA'S RESPONSE TO STATE PUBLICLY IF WE WISH TO US SETHNA'S RESPONSE.

4. WHILE SETHNA HAS BEEN MOST FORTHCOMING IN PROVIDING ALL KINDS OF TECHNICAL DETAIL RELATING TO STOCK CAPACITY, SECURITY AND SAFEGUARDS, HE HAS STEDFASTLY RESISTED MAKING ANY STRAIGHT-FORWARD ESTIMATE ON EFFECTS OF LICENSE DELAY ON POWER OUTPUT AT TARAPUR. I DOUBT THAT MUCH MORE CAN BE DONE, PARTICULARLY AS HE WOULD PREFER TO SEE CASE ARGUED UP TERMS OF OUR CONTRACTUAL RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPLY FUEL AND OF WHAT HE REGARDS AS GOOD HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY RECORD AT TARAPUR.

5. HOWEVER, AS SETHNA NOTES AT END OF HIS LETTER REPLYING TO STATE 60871, HE IS WILLING TO TALK FURTHER ABOUT ASSISTING IN DEPARTMENT'S PRESENTATION AT NRC'S MARCH 17 HEARING, BUT I DOUBT THAT HE CAN BE MOVED IN DIRECTION WE WANT TO GO. IN FACT, ONE COULD VIEW HIS LATEST LETTER AS REFLECTING SOME RETROGRESSION. HOWEVER, IF DEPARTMENT WISHES AND EMBASSY AGREES, I'M WILLING TO TRY AGAIN, IF GIVEN SOME FRESH ARGUMENTS.

COURTNEY

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Message Attributes

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